



ACTION ITEMS: YEAR 4 FUNDING – RACE TO THE TOP
AMENDMENT #4 TO DISTRICT RACE TO THE TOP PLAN – EXPAND TEACHER INCENTIVES
TO WORK IN HIGH NEEDS SCHOOLS

ITEM NUMBER: E.1.

1. Superintendent's Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Christina School Board approve a recommendation to amend the District's Race to the Top Plan. Once approved, this recommendation will be submitted to the Delaware Department of Education for approval.

In a letter received by the District on February 14, 2013, the Christina School District was notified that the Delaware Department of Education was of the opinion that the district is currently non-compliant in terms of meeting commitments outlined in the District's Race to the Top Plan more specifically around teacher incentives. Within that letter, the District was given two possible remedies to this situation:

With respect to CSD's non-compliance to its commitments, the DDOE requests that CSD provide a written response to DDOE within fifteen days that does one of the following:

- a) Accepts DDOE's invitation to participate in the Delaware Talent Cooperative; or*
- b) Outlines a detailed request to amend Objective 5 of its plan. This amendment would be subject to DDOE approval and must meet the conditions outlined in the "Subgrantee Race to the Top Monitoring Plan"*

Should the district fail to meet the aforementioned conditions associated with being removed from non-compliant status, DDOE will initiate the process of withholding the entirety of district RTTT funding in Year 4 of the grant (\$2,396,850). These potential consequences come after many months of intensive collaboration and partnership with CSD on the implementation of several statewide initiatives, including the Delaware Talent Cooperative.

District Administration and the CEA worked together to understand and consider the Delaware Talent Coop Program. Our team has worked with and supported the DDOE on many of the initiatives developed in response to the state's Race to the Top Plan. But as the state's process for teachers to become "highly effective" continued to be difficult to define with a consistent and equitable measure of success for professional teachers from all content areas, District and CEA leadership agreed that they could not support significant monetary compensation for potentially a select few teachers identified as "highly effective" by a system that has not yet demonstrated that its own effectiveness could be shown.

In response to the letter sent by the DDOE on February 14, 2013, the Christina Administration and the CEA together recommend that the Board accept this amendment to the District's plan to help to support staff stability in our most challenging schools.

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2. Background/Analysis:

First, it needs to be stated for the record that the District feels that we ARE in compliance with the initiatives and commitments outlined in our RTTT Plan.

While certain activities within Objective 5 – Develop Incentives for Teachers to work in High Needs Schools - were outlined in the plan as potential incentives for teachers, these were clearly labeled as “place holders” until such opportunities were proven to be acceptable by our partner, the Christina Education Association. During the time which has elapsed between the initial design of the plan and today, Christina has entered into three Partnership Zone agreements with the Department of Education. As a part of the most recent PZ agreement approved by the Department of Education, one for Bancroft Elementary School, an incentive of a Professional Enterprise Stipend of \$1,000 per year for two years was offered to teachers to acknowledge their commitment to the school and to the Plan being developed to rapidly “transform” Bancroft. This Incentive went into effect in the Fall of 2012 and was actively embraced by the staff over the late fall and early winter. This incentive has been since praised by teachers, administrators, as well as by the Association as a truly equitable acknowledgement of professionalism. All of the teachers in Bancroft have access to the funds and many teachers are using the stipend to support technology in their classrooms, acquire additional classroom materials, and to support professional training and conferences.

The District will be utilizing the funding associated with Objective 5 – Develop Incentives for Teachers to work in High Needs Schools - to provide access to the same Professional Enterprise Stipend of \$ 1,000 per year for two years for teachers at Stubbs Elementary School and Glasgow High School; the District's other two Partnership Zone Schools – in Spring 2013. Teachers who are rated “effective” based on DPAS Components I – IV will be able to apply for these stipends if they commit to remain in Stubbs or GHS for the next school year. Neither Partnership Zone plan for these schools included such incentives and the District is committed to acknowledge the staff in these identified schools as well as incentivize the option to remain in these schools as their PZ commitments come to term this spring.

Clearly this incentive program will meet the intentions of Objective 5 in the District's Race to the Top Plan as currently outlined thus maintaining “compliance” with the applicable requirements of the agreement outlined in the NOTOG from DDOE/USED.

The amendment before the board tonight proposes to expand this initiative to include **ALL** teachers in Christina's identified **Focus Schools**, addressing the Objective 5 – Develop Incentives for Teachers to work in High Needs Schools equitably across all teachers involved. Developing this amendment has been a truly collaborative process between district administration and the CEA.

Again, in response to the letter sent by the DDOE on February 14, 2013, the Christina Administration and the CEA together recommend that the Board accept this amendment to reallocate funding within the District's Race to the Top plan, expanding teacher incentives to support staff stability in all of Christina's identified High Needs Schools.

3. Fiscal Impact: All funds outlined below are within the District's Race to the Top Funding allocations.

TEACHER INCENTIVES - ALL IDENTIFIED SCHOOLS = approximately 355 teachers X \$1,000 per year for two years = \$ 710,000 required.

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Currently allocated Funds for Objective 5 - Teacher Incentives	\$ 260,000
Peer Assistance Reviewer Program (Not started)	\$ 250,000
<u>Ed Projects Manager (vacant for 18 months)</u>	<u>\$ 243,000</u>
TOTAL	\$ 753,000
(Includes all OEC's and indirect costs)	

4. Prepared by: Dr. Freeman Williams, Superintendent

5. Board Meeting Date: February 25, 2013

Attachments: Proposed Amendment #4 to District Race to the Top Plan

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